

REMARKS

In order to expedite prosecution of this application, the independent claims (claims 1, 16 and 26) have been amended to make it absolutely clear that the flexible tubing cannot possibly be insulation on a solid core wire. To this end, the claims now point out that the flexible tubing is hollow.

The Examiner has rejected applicant's claims, using Imran U.S. Patent No. 5,908,405 as his principal reference. Many of the claims, including all three independent claims, have been rejected as being anticipated by Imran. This rejection should be withdrawn.

Applicant's steerable balloon catheter is significantly different in construction from Imran's and applicant's claims very clearly point out the structural differences. For example, applicant's claims specify that applicant's steerable balloon catheter has an inner elongated flexible hollow tubing having proximal and distal portions. Referring to an example of this in Fig. 2 of applicant's drawings, see inner elongated flexible hollow tubing 12.

Applicant's invention includes a flexible helical coil having proximal and distal ends (see coil 18, Fig. 3). The proximal end of the helical coil 18 is attached to the distal portion of the inner elongated flexible hollow tubing 12.

An elongated deflection member 20 having proximal and distal portions is slidably disposed within hollow tubing 12 and within the helical coil 18. The distal portion of the deflection member is flattened to form a deflection ribbon which extends in a plane.

A retaining ribbon 24 (Fig. 5) is provided having proximal and distal ends. The proximal end of the retaining ribbon is attached to the distal portion of flexible hollow tubing 12 (see Fig. 5) and the retaining ribbon is oriented to extend in a plane which is generally parallel to the plane of the deflection ribbon 34.

An attachment member 22 engages the distal end of the helical coil 18, the distal portion of the deflection member 34 and the distal end of the retaining ribbon 36 so that longitudinal movement of the deflection member in a distal direction causes the distal end of the helical coil to be deflected in one direction and longitudinal movement of the deflection member in a proximal direction causes the distal end of the helical coil to deflect in another opposite direction. An outer elongated flexible tubing 27 surrounds the inner elongated hollow tubing 12 so as to define a passageway 33 between the outer tubing 27 and the inner hollow tubing 12. An inflatable balloon 29 is mounted on the outer flexible tubing 27 and communicates with the passageway 33 between the outer tubing 27 and the inner hollow tubing 12.

The Imran disclosure is significantly different and actually teaches away from an inner and outer tubing extending through a balloon for attachment to a helical coil. The Examiner refers to items 24, 86 and 171 of Imran as "an inner flexible tube". This is erroneous. Item 24 is a layer of insulation on a solid coil wire 18. It is certainly not an inner hollow tube. Item 86 is a 0.005 inch insulative coating on a solid core wire 78. Obviously 86 is not an inner hollow tube. Still further, item 171 of Imran is an outer sleeve, not an inner hollow tube.

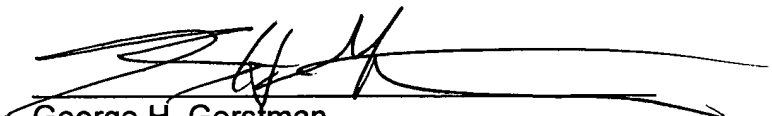
Imran does not have an outer tube surrounding an inner tube to define a passageway between the outer tube and inner tube, with a balloon mounted on the

outer tube and communicating with the passageway. Imran does not have an inner hollow tube as now claimed in all of applicant's claims. Imran's helical coil is not attached to the distal portion of an inner flexible hollow tube as claimed. Imran does not disclose a retaining ribbon attached to the distal portion of an inner hollow tube as claimed.

Imran's balloon catheter is significantly different in structure from applicant's novel steerable balloon catheter. Applicant's steerable balloon catheter is a significant advance in the art and the claims have been very carefully drafted to clearly define applicant's invention over the prior art.

In view of the amendments and remarks, it is submitted that all of the claims of the present application are allowable and an early notice of allowance is respectfully requested.


Respectfully submitted,
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